

# The Modernist

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London Catholic Truth Society No.cts0016 (1908)

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## Introduction

The object of these pages is twofold: first and mainly, to show that Pius X could do no otherwise than to eject the Modernist from the Catholic Church — he has no place there; secondly, to show John Henry Newman the whole-hearted opponent of Modernism, as it was not then called but as it existed in his day.

As the Papal Encyclical and Syllabus condemns no man by name, so these pages are strictly impersonal: no individual is either mentioned or aimed at in them. I shall be glad if any one will disavow this doctrine of Modernism, and cry that it never was his. Yet let him cry out without anger: the doctrine is not imputed to him.

The discourses are founded on the Syllabus *Lamentabili* issued July 3, 1907, and the Encyclical *Pascendi dominici gregis* of September 8, 1907, the authorized translation of which may be had of Messrs. Burns & Oates, price twopence. Of the sixty-five propositions condemned in the Syllabus, the following are chiefly dealt with in these pages.

**Prop. 3.** From ecclesiastical judgements and censures passed upon the free and more erudite interpretation of Scripture, it may be gathered that the faith proposed by the Church contradicts history, and that Catholic dogmas really cannot be reconciled with the truer origins of the Christian religion.

**Prop. 6.** In the defining of truths the Church taught and the Church teaching work together in such a way that nothing is left for the Church teaching but to sanction the common opinions of the Church taught.

**Prop. 9.** They display either excessive simplicity or excessive ignorance, who believe that God is really the author of Holy Scripture.

**Prop. 12.** A Scripture student, if he wishes to apply himself to biblical studies to any good purpose, should begin by discarding any preconceived opinion of the supernatural origin of Holy Scripture, and interpret it no otherwise than he would interpret documents merely human.

**Prop. 14.** In sundry narratives the Evangelists have related, not so much what is true as what, though false, they reckoned to be more profitable to their readers.

**Prop. 16.** The narratives of John are not properly history, but a mystic contemplation of the Gospel; the discourses contained in his Gospel are theological meditations on the mystery of salvation, destitute of historical truth.

**Prop. 19.** Heterodox interpreters have expressed the true sense of Scripture more faithfully than Catholic interpreters.

**Prop. 20.** Revelation could have been nothing else than a consciousness acquired by man of his relation to God.

**Prop. 22.** The dogmas which the Church gives out as revealed are not truths that have fallen from heaven, but are a certain interpretation put upon religious facts by a laborious effort of the human mind.

**Prop. 23.** There may exist, and there actually does exist, an opposition between the facts narrated in Holy Scripture and the dogmas of the Church resting on them; so that the critics may reject as false what the Church believes as most certain fact.

**Prop. 26.** The dogmas of the Church are to be retained only in their practical sense, that is to say, as a rule of behaviour but not as a rule of belief.

**Prop. 29.** We may allow that Christ, such as history exhibits Him, is much inferior to the Christ who is the object of faith.

**Prop. 36.** The resurrection of the Saviour is not properly a fact of the historical order, but is a fact of the merely supernatural order, neither proved nor provable, which the Christian consciousness has gradually derived from other facts.

**Prop. 49.** As the Christian Supper gradually took the form of a liturgical action, they who had been used to preside at the Supper acquired a priestly character.

**Prop. 54.** Dogma, Sacraments, a Hierarchy, as well in principle as in fact, are only so many interpretations and developments of the Christian intelligence, developments that by additions from without have increased and perfected the slight germ that was latent in the Gospel.

**Prop. 58.** Truth is no more unchangeable than man himself, being evolved with him, in him, and through him.

**Prop. 59.** Christ did not teach a definite body of doctrine applicable to all times and to all men, but rather began a religious movement adapted or adaptable to a variety of times and places.

**Prop. 63.** The Church shows herself unequal to the task of effectual guardianship of Gospel morality, because she obstinately adheres to unchangeable doctrines that cannot be reconciled with modern progress.

**Prop. 65.** The Catholicism of the day cannot be reconciled with true science otherwise than by undergoing a transformation into undogmatic Christianity, that is to say, a broad and liberal Protestantism.

The following pages contain the substance of courses of sermons preached at St. Francis Xavier's, Liverpool; at St. Mary's-on-the-Quay, Bristol; and at the Church of the English Martyrs, Streatham.

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## I. The Modernist versus the Church Hierarchical

The Church is hierarchical, inasmuch as she is governed by the sacred rule of Bishops, in communion with the Sovereign Pontiff, the Bishop of Rome. A simple Priest has no authority except in subordination to some Bishop. Still less have the laity anything to do with the government of the Church. As Christ governed His disciples — *Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am* (John xiii. 13) — so He chose out of them twelve, whom He named Apostles (the name means Commissioners, Luke vi. 13), to be His substitutes after His departure, and, bearing His commission, to rule in His stead (Luke x. 16). And they did rule.

The infant Church was no democracy. Peter, Paul, and John, the only Apostles of whose action we have detailed notice, were highly pontifical. What was to be the mind and behaviour of subsequent Innocents and Gregorys was their mind and behaviour. For St. Peter see Acts v. 1–11, viii. 20–22; 1 Pet. v. 1–5, where the very moderation inculcated in the use of power argues the consciousness of possessing it. Of St. Paul's dogmatism and habit of command, we have a striking example in Galatians i. 8, 9: his epistles are weighty and strong, 2 Cor. x. 1–11, xiii. 1–10; 1 Cor. v.; 1 Tim. vi. 3. St. John, according to the reading of the Revised Version, lays an excommunication on the ill-advised Progressivist (ὁ προάγων), the Modernist of his day (2 John 9, 10, 11). St. Paul left Titus behind in Crete to correct things amiss, and appoint presbyters in every city (Titus i. 5). Similarly he ordained Timothy bishop (2 Tim. i. 6), with many directions for the exercise of his power (1 Tim. v. 22).<sup>1</sup> The seven angels, or Bishops, of the Churches in Asia Minor are responsible for the correction of abuses there (Apoc. ii., iii.).

<sup>1</sup> I assume the usual adscription of 1 and 2 Timothy and of 2 John, anyhow very ancient.

That everything in the Church centres in the Bishop, that nothing must be done but by his authority, is the essential teaching of St. Ignatius of Antioch and of St. Cyprian. The 4th and 5th centuries, the great ages of Councils, whatever else they show, testify to the pre-eminence of the episcopal order; and that pre-eminence stands to the present day. Episcopacy is the very life of the Church. In this hierarchical constitution the Modernist sees a remnant of Roman imperialism, or mediaeval feudalism, now destined to yield place to modern democracy. The Modernist is strongly tinged with that dislike of sacerdotalism which marked the Protestant revolt of the 16th century. Both Order and Jurisdiction are to him human institutions (Prop. 49): in the latter he considers that the layman should bear his share. And why not, if what he calls "the Christian consciousness," not the personal institution of Christ, has set up the Church and all that is in it? Why not, if this counsel or work be of men, and not of God (Acts v. 38, 39)?

Originally a Catholic, the Modernist still holds to the name. Even while teaching what the Pope has called "a synthesis of all heresies," it is part of his programme to remain in the communion of the Catholic Church. Towards that Church he has no loyalty; he cherishes for it a very different sentiment, admiration. He has no mind at all to obey the living pastors of the Church; in no sense of the word does this thoroughly disobedient man belong to the "Roman obedience"; but he admires the Church for her greatness, her antiquity, her ritual, and the splendid services she has rendered mankind, as also do many who own no obedience to Rome. Admiring her, he is bent on reforming her. As Medea did of old to her father-in-law Aison, he would put old Mother Church, hewn limb

from limb, into a seething cauldron, and bring her out rejuvenated: into which cauldron the Pope decidedly refuses to step.

It will be the aim of these pages to show that, logically, the Modernist has no place in the Catholic Church. If he is right, then, as the Anglican Article puts it, "the Church of Rome hath erred." To say that, is to cease to be a Catholic. I can understand men who, bred outside the Catholic Church, agree with the Modernist in many or all of his criticisms upon that Church, who hold his philosophy and are satisfied with his history and exegesis: what I cannot understand, or patiently bear, is such a thinker still pretending to be a Catholic. He is spiritually and ecclesiastically dead, and his place knoweth him no more (Job vii. 10). Still, by God's mercy, he may return and claim it. *The tree hath hope, its root is still in the earth, at the scent of water it shall revive* (ibid. xiv. 7–9).

Every one sees how the Church is assailed by biblical criticism and history. Not only assailed, the Modernist thinks, but captured and bound to surrender at discretion; her teaching is definitely shown to be wrong. In that case, an ordinary man would have thought, there is nothing left but to abandon her. Not so the Modernist. He will save her. He will negotiate a capitulation for her. She shall surrender her claim to teaching what is ordinarily called "truth": enough that her teaching, however untrue, works well and serves a useful purpose. "It is not authentic," I once heard it put, "but highly consoling." Nay, it shall actually be called "true," in spite of fact and history: for what is truth, after all, but belief that works well? Hopelessly vanquished in the arena of criticism and science, the Church may yet be saved by philosophy.

The Modernist is shy of posing as a philosopher; yet there is a certain philosophy at the base of all his speculations. Not the philosophy which the Church especially approves, the scholastic philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas. The Modernist abhors scholasticism: he says it puts the Church in irons. The philosopher from whom he draws his inspiration is Immanuel Kant. Kant lays it down in his *Critique of Pure Reason* that the human intellect, whereof is born human science, is incapable of dealing with anything but phenomena, i.e., sensations and feelings, states of consciousness, forms of the mind. Such is the object-matter of all human science. But God certainly is no phenomenon, therefore He is not intellectually known, science cannot touch Him, the proofs alleged for His existence are invalid.

The Modernist agrees with Kant. He is quite unmoved by St. Paul's declaration, *the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are known and discerned from the things that he has made* (Rom. i. 26); quite unmoved by the Canon of the Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, "if any man saith that God, Creator and Lord of all things, cannot be known with certainty from the things that He has made, let him be anathema." The Modernist is well used to holding his own against Council and Apostle. "The Church of Rome hath erred."

Kant, however, had no notion of turning atheist, nor, to do him justice, has the Modernist. Kant was what is called in Germany a "pietist": he was smitten with that undogmatic, emotional piety which Luther inspired, well known once in England in what are called "Evangelical" circles. God was not to be reached by intellect, so Kant thought; still He must be reached somehow, for human nature cannot do without God: He is more necessary than light and air.

Accordingly Kant put forward another faculty which he called "Practical Reason": we must believe in God for practical purposes, though we cannot know Him. What man needs, is. But how do we know that? Surely it is a proposition hard to hold, in view of the limitation of our knowledge to phenomena. It is a proposition of metaphysics, of the science of being. But Kant has destroyed

metaphysics, leaving us only psychology, or the science of what man thinks. Thus limited, we cannot escape from ourselves. We cannot say absolutely, God is, but only, Man cannot help wishing God to be.

Kant in our day has been reinforced by the doctrine called Humanism or Pragmatism, which teaches that truth is to each man whatever he finds expedient to believe, so long as he finds it expedient. Every man thus has his own truth, made by his own belief, in view of good to come of believing. Every man thus, according to the old Greek saying, "is the measure of all things" to himself, "of the being of things that are" (are to him while he believes them), "and of the non-existence of things that are not" (to him while he disbelieves them).

Exactly this doctrine the Modernist has taken up (see Prop. 58) and applied to religion. Man needs religion, and makes it for himself accordingly. So long as he finds his account in believing it, it is a good religion, and therefore a true religion, to the believer, but not thereby to other men, nor even to that individual for all time: his expediency, his belief, his truth may change; fixity of dogma arrests progress (Propp. 26, 59, 63, 65). This teaching applies to all dogmas, even to that of the existence of God. For the existence of God, Modernists appeal to "private experience," the equivalent apparently of Kant's "practical reason," something distinct from intellectual knowledge. Certainly I have private experience of my yearning after God, and of a sort of moral constraint to believe in God; but what if the yearning dies down and the constraint passes off? The Modernist replies that that would mark a deterioration in my moral situation; restore the situation, and the experience returns. That is very true, but does it not suppose that objectively and in the nature of things there are better and worse situations, better and worse frames of mind, and consequently that the subjectivity and relativity of all truth, which is the root of Modernism, is an error?

This, indeed, is the weakness and inconsistency of Modernism, that while its votaries profess to identify truth with expediency of belief — thus making will and emotion, not intellect, the judge of truth — they are perpetually harking back to the ordinary thought of mankind, making truth to be conformity with fact, an intellectualist position. Thus in Prop. 14 they distinguish things "false" from "things more profitable to readers," where "false" is evidently taken in the old-fashioned, non-pragmatical, even anti-pragmatical sense. So of the mention of "historic truth" in Prop. 16; of things "false," though believed by the Church, in Prop. 23; of "history" as opposed to "faith," in Prop. 29.

The more logical Modernist position I take to be this: a distinction must be drawn between intellectual truth and emotional truth. Intellectual truth is such belief as can be verified by experiment of the senses, as our beliefs in the arrival and departure of trains and other practical occurrences of daily life; or, again, in the uniformities observed in physical science; or, again, historical beliefs, for which we have documentary evidence. Emotional belief is in matter that lies beyond sense, particularly in the matter of religion and of the unseen world. This belief, too, must be checked by experience; and the only experience available to check it is by finding out how it works, for good or for evil. While such a belief works well, we hold it to be true; when it works less well, we begin to doubt; and when it comes to work altogether badly, we give it up entirely, it is no longer true in our regard. Of the working of any particular belief each individual must judge for himself, and each age must judge for itself. The Church must adapt herself to the age, not attempt to rule it (Propp. 6, 59, 63). The mind of the laity at any given age in the Church is called "the Christian consciousness." It makes dogmas, and even Sacraments; but these dogmas and these Sacraments have changed from what they were (Prop. 49), and may yet be further changed. This, of course, is pure Protestantism, even of the lowest Nonconformist type (Prop. 65).

If we can imagine a company of professors during a long voyage getting down into the engine-room and tampering with the machinery — imagine also the attitude at once assumed and the language addressed to those professors by captain and officers — imagine also the dismay of the passengers at the vessel falling under such management; one can understand the action taken by the Church's hierarchy, by the Pope and Bishops, against these Modernist doctrinaires who wish to guide the Bark of Peter. One can understand, too, the abhorrence which a Catholic, instructed in the nature of their designs — for most Catholics are utterly unaware of them — must feel for such audacity. I say confidently that, were Modernist schemes of reform taken up, the Church could not keep afloat for ten years. Modernism is its own undoing. It reduces the most sacred dogmas and Sacraments of Christianity to delicious dreams. Rouse the slumberer, tell him it is all a dream, and he will dream it no longer. Tell me that the Resurrection of my Saviour does not belong to history, that it is incapable of proof, that it is a subjective notion, gradually evolved in Christian consciousness (Prop. 36) — I do not believe you, but if I did believe you, I should cease to be a Christian. According to the Modernist, the Church of ages has been living in a fool's paradise. To adapt a sentence used in a slightly different connection: "we can remain in our fool's paradise only so long as we abstain from the fruit of the Modernist tree of knowledge."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *Mind*, for November, 1907, p. 587.

The Modernist effort to rejuvenate Catholicism reminds us of the attempt of the Emperor Julian to revive paganism. By the opening of the 4th century A.D. the pagan deities were utterly discredited with most thinking people, and pagan mythologies condemned as inane. Yet paganism had a long ancestry and a gorgeous, if not exactly a glorious, tradition. It had been ministered to by the highest creations of art in sculpture, architecture, and painting. Poets like Homer, Pindar, Virgil were its prophets. Its temples covered the land. It had its priests and its ceremonies, fascinating to the eye of the spectator, minute and curious to the investigation of the student. Many were of opinion that the worship of the immortal gods, most of all of the Dea Roma and the Divinity of the Emperor, had created and still was the soundest mainstay of the Roman Empire. Paganism in the year of grace 325, with many specious advantages, had one fatal defect — as a system it was not true. Probably Julian himself discerned the lack of truth; but the system was useful, it was splendid, it lent itself so well — much better than did Christianity — to the purposes of the world. Yet paganism was not to be. Even had Julian lived it scarcely could have triumphed, it was too transparently false. Nor can the Catholic system live on the title of its splendours or its utilities; it can live and be fertile of good in the hearts of its votaries only so long as they firmly hold it to be objectively true, only so long as it is assumed to reveal to our faith God as one day our eyes shall see Him.

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## II. The Modernist versus the Church Historical

"No historical religion" is a cry raised in our time. If the Modernist does not altogether take up that cry, he at least holds that there is very little of historical truth, nay, much that is historically false, in the Christian Creed. "The faith proposed by the Church contradicts history" (Prop. 3). "John's narratives are not properly history" (Prop. 16). "The resurrection of the Saviour is not properly a fact of the historical order" (Prop. 36).

A fact of history is a fact that has taken place in time. Thus it differs from a truth of science, which is timeless. History deals with existences, science with essences or natures. A fact of history is

contingent: it is, but might never have been. A truth of science is necessary. History deals with events, and more properly with human events; the ages before man was on earth are usually styled "prehistoric." Science deals with laws, and with events as following invariably and unconditionally upon laws. My own existence is a fact of history; but the specific structure of my body, and the manner of working proper to my mind, are truths of science. The laws of harmony and of electricity are truths of science; the building of an organ in this particular church, the application of electricity to purposes of traction, are facts of history. Organ or no organ — even though there should be no musical instrument in the world — still such and such notes struck together make a harmony, and such and such others make a discord; the nature of music is eternal, only the actual instruments are things made in time.

One existence alone is a fact of science, not of history: that is the existence of God Himself. God did not happen, or come to be in the course of time: His being is necessary, eternal and timeless. A religion which had only one dogma, the existence of God, would be not an historical religion: such is theism. But religion needs worshippers, and worshippers are creatures, and creation is a fact of history, the beginning of all history, and also the beginning of time. Like other historical events, creation need not have been. God the Holy Trinity might have lived eternally alone, the three Divine Persons forming society sufficient for themselves. So the Catholic Church teaches. Much modern philosophy has it that creation is a necessary emanation from God, for much modern philosophy is pantheistic. Were that so, creation, being from eternity, would be a fact of science, not of history; nay, it might be found, on further development of the emanation theory, that the whole course of human history was matter of science, following necessarily upon the being of God. Men, however, do not commonly think so, and the Church teaches otherwise, for the Church asserts free will, as well in the Creator, as such, as also in His rational creatures.

Had God so willed it, the fact of creation might have been the one historical fact involved in religion. Except as involving that fact, mere theism is not an historical religion; and God might have left us to mere theism. Man might have been left to his natural reason to discover that there was a God — for *the heavens are telling the glory of God* (Psa. xviii.); and again to his natural conscience, upon that discovery, to worship God. Over and above the manifestation that He has made of Himself in the book of nature, God was not obliged in many particulars and in many manners to speak to our fathers by the prophets; still less was He bound to speak to us by his Son (Heb. i. 1, 2). Nor was that Divine Son bound to suffer and die for us, to provide us with a Church, a Creed and Sacraments. All these mysteries of Christ are facts of the historical order: they are not to be got at by meditation on the eternal fitness of things. They constitute Christianity essentially and eminently an historical religion, not a philosophy.

Now the Modernism condemned by the Holy See strips Christianity of its historical character. It strikes off the roll of historical facts the birth of our Lord of a Virgin; the union in Him of Divine with human nature; His Incarnation as the Second Person of the Trinity made man; His human consciousness of the Divinity with which He was personally united; His intention to found a Church which He meant to last for ages, and to confer the headship of that Church upon Peter and the successors of Peter; His making His Apostles priests of the New Testament; His giving them power to offer sacrifice and convert bread and wine into His Body and Blood; His institution of confession and of priestly absolution; finally His Resurrection and Ascension.

The Modernist may profess that he denies none of these things. I am not dealing with individuals nor with the beliefs of individuals. But the impersonal, typical Modernist, he who is condemned in

the Encyclical, does deny all these things as facts of history; he says that they are not events which ever took place in time. But, says the Pope, an event which never took place in time is not a fact at all. Yes, replies the Modernist, it is a fact, it is a fact of human consciousness, pregnant with mighty results for good. Here the Kantian subjectivism appears, and that is what the Pope condemns; he will have Christianity to be objective. A fact of human consciousness is a phenomenon of the human mind; the only fact about it is the fact of man having thought so, and, if you like to add, having felt better for thinking so. To say that these things are facts of consciousness is merely to say that men have believed them. But human beliefs do not make history, even as human science does not make nature and the universe (see Propp. 16, 22, 26, 29, 36, 49, 59). In the interest of historical and scientific truth, as well as of faith and orthodoxy, the Pope is calling upon mankind not to acquiesce in subjective attitudes of mind and states of consciousness, however pleasing, not in theories and dreams, not in constructions of emotion and sentimental preferences, but, on behalf of their immortal souls, to face up to facts as they are, and events as they have actually taken place, and be content with nothing short of that; for on the hard order of objective fact depends as well our temporal well-being as also our eternal salvation. A fact "evolved by consciousness," "Christian" or otherwise, over and above what actually took place, is simply no fact at all, and has no value except as other works of fiction may have value to give us some little distraction and amusement when our minds are over-harassed by the hard realities of life. Is the theologian, the preacher, the catechist to take his stand with the novelist and the playwright? Is the Gospel a poem, like the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*? Is Christianity a myth? Say so by all means if you dare, but no longer call yourself a Christian.

The Modernist, I say, is not even a Protestant of the old orthodox type — he has no dogmas at all, much less Thirty-nine Articles — he is a registrar and recorder of human beliefs, or what is commonly called a Positivist. Still he claims to be a Catholic, a reformer of the Church; and when the Pope, voicing the common mind of Christian people, casts him out, him and his works, then he poses as a maligned and misunderstood man!

Every historian knows how provokingly abrupt and brief on certain points are the records of early Christianity. As a man is minded in approaching them, so will he read them. Rightly or wrongly, he will read his own mind into them, filling in lacunae with his own prepossessions. The Modernist here inculcates a freedom from preconceptions which he is far from having secured for himself (Propp. 12, 33). As if he were not led by preconceived opinions, sixty-five of them! Not by any effort of abstraction, but with his mind made up on the whole issue, he approaches Holy Scripture as an ordinary book; an ordinary book to him it remains and shall remain; great, he says, must be either the simplicity or the ignorance of any reader who takes it for aught else (Prop. 9). From the first he has taken his stand with the heterodox commentator (Prop. 19): *If thou sawest a thief thou didst run with him, and hast thrown in thy lot with adulterers* (Psa. xlix. 18). One set of historical conclusions the Modernist resolutely avoids, namely, whatever makes in favour of the ordinary teaching of the Catholic Church. These ill-conditioned children of the Catholic Church delight in destroying the cherished heirlooms of their venerable and holy Mother. And all this destruction, they tell her, is for her good, which they understand better than she does herself. She must be ruled by them (Prop. 6).

Now I do not for a moment deny that a Catholic does approach the history of the origin of Christianity with preconceived opinions. He would not be a Catholic if he did not approach with preconceived opinions, nay, with immovably fixed dogmas. A Catholic is not for ever tearing up the

plants of his faith by the roots to see how they grow. Faith is rooted in his heart once for all. When he approaches a truth of faith, he approaches it in the temper of the retained advocate, not as a judge, still less as counsel for the prosecution. He takes St. Paul's injunction, *prove all things* (1 Thess. v. 21) in the sense which the same Apostle, writing to the same Thessalonians afterwards assigns, as an injunction to *stand fast and hold by the traditions which you have been taught* (2 Thess. ii. 15). He will prove all things by the standard of the Catholic faith, and will reject any conclusions tendered to him in the name of history if it clash with that faith. He will be a Catholic first, an historian afterwards. The Modernist is a philosopher first, an historian afterwards. As the Encyclical says, "his whole history is saturated with his philosophy," that Kantian or Neo-Kantian philosophy, which will not intellectually recognize things in themselves, but only impressions, forms, and other creations of the human mind. The Modernist's history is saturated with his philosophy: the Catholic's history is saturated with his faith.

The Catholic faith is a bar to one sort of historical inquiry, not to another. It bars the inquiry of doubt, not the inquiry of erudition. Creed and commandments for us are settled once for all. We cannot play fast and loose with them. We move whither we are borne by them, without apprehension of any unforeseen discovery suddenly coming round the corner to overturn our seated faith. Strong in our faith, we are not afraid of provable facts. There is no class of facts that we could wish to burke, or leave untouched like a dangerous explosive. It is quite true their facts often create difficulties to which we have no adequate answer. We do not abandon our faith for the difficulty; we go on believing and trust God for the answer. Often, too, in course of time, by further study and consultation, we may discover an answer that at least diminishes the difficulty. What is the man worth in any region of human speculation or action who cannot hold on to a once well-chosen course in spite of difficulties? No, it is not the facts of our opponents that we resent, but the conclusions that they draw beyond the evidence of fact — their taking of the plausible hypothesis for the only possible explanation of the facts — in a word, not the jewel of fact, but their setting of it.

I call the search after historical facts bearing on the origins of Christianity, on the part of a Christian believer, the historical "inquiry of erudition." It enables the searcher to help other men who are not yet believers, as St. Peter counsels that we should *be ready ever to render an account to any that asketh a reason of the hope that is in us* (1 Pet. iii. 15). It also makes the believer's own faith more intelligent, as knowing more exactly what does and what does not enter into the object of his faith, and in face of what difficulties he holds his faith: now, other things being equal, the more intelligent faith is the more robust. The "inquiry of doubt," on the other hand, is inconsistent with faith. Yet even such inquiry has its right place in the inquirer who, never having had faith, is looking for religious truth. What I have in mind is much better expressed than I could put it in Cardinal Newman's *Loss and Gain*, part 2, chap. vi., from which I quote, altering for my purpose "private judgement" into "the inquiry of doubt."

"Now it need not be denied that those who are external to the Church must begin with the inquiry of doubt: they use it in order ultimately to supersede it, as a man out of doors uses a lamp on a dark night, and puts it out when he gets home. What would be thought of his bringing it into his drawing-room? what would the goodly company there assembled before a genial hearth and under glittering chandeliers, the bright ladies and the well-dressed gentlemen, say to him if he came in with a great-coat on his back, a hat on his head, an umbrella under his arm, and a large stable-lantern in his hand? Yet what would be thought, on the other hand, if he precipitated himself into the inhospitable

night and the war of the elements in his ball-dress? When the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man who had not on a wedding-garment (Matt. xxii. 11), he saw a man who determined to live in the Church as he had lived out of it, who would not use his privileges, who would not exchange reason for faith, who would not accommodate his thoughts and doings to the glorious scene which surrounded him, who was groping for the hidden treasure and digging for the pearl of price in the high, lustrous, all-jewelled Temple of the Lord of Hosts; who shut his eyes and speculated, when he might open them and see. There is no absurdity then, or inconsistency, in a person first using the historical inquiry of doubt and then denouncing its use. Circumstances change duties."

I may add that what Newman calls using the privileges of a believer and exchanging reason for faith, is called by St. John Chrysostom "quelling arguments and submitting yourself to the Master" (in 1 Cor. i. 22). The time to do that is when "the inquiry of doubt" has brought a man to see the reasonableness of doubting no longer; when reason has led him beyond the risk of prudent doubt to discern a power higher than reason, to which reason must once for all submit. That stage will never be reached by reason unaided by grace; and grace will never be given except to him who prays; and he will never pray who does not conduct his search after God with reverence; for in looking for God, is not man looking for a Master? and should a Master be sought in the same spirit in which a man labours to detect the properties of iodine and chlorine, or traces the history of county families?

They whom the Pope condemns seem to be under the impression that any poor fool can believe implicitly what the Church teaches, but that to rise up to modernize and remodel the beliefs of their fellow-Catholics is the part of choice spirits. Now certainly faith does not depend upon material endowments or high education: it is offered to the old woman and the ragged child, it is adapted to the capacity of the poor and simple. Yet, for all that, faith is not an easy thing: nay, without a peculiar grace of God drawing the soul to Himself and teaching it, faith is an impossible thing. All the history and criticism, all the erudition and science of all the Universities in the world, is unequal to the production of one act of faith. *No man can come to me unless it be given him of the Father* (John vi. 65). A man requires a sort of sixth sense to believe unto salvation; and this sixth sense can no more be created by human industry than any other of the other five senses can be created: man can remove obstacles, or he can place obstacles in the way of its infusion; that is all. Faith, hope, charity, sanctification, and salvation, all come of God cultivating man in Christ, not of the human spirit evolving itself. The latter process is not to be taken for the former, as the Modernist takes it, for the Modernist, like the Jansenist, is much to seek in the matter of grace. To the grace of faith, so widely and so freely proffered, the great obstacle is pride. And, says the Pope, "pride sits in Modernism as in its own house." *I am come*, says our Lord, *that they who see*, who will look at things in their own way in defiance of authority, *should become blind* (John ix. 39). No wonder that Modernism has become what the Pope further calls it, "the synthesis of all heresies." History being the record of events that have occurred in time, all heresy is summed up in the Modernist's comprehensive statement that "the faith proposed by the Church contradicts history" (Prop. 3). Faith at variance with historical fact is a delusion, a dream, an hallucination. To say that it is agreeable, or profitable, or that it works well (Prop. 26), is not to save it: our faith is naught if it be not a hold upon truth. Christianity is an historical religion: it is not a collection of legends, not a philosophy, not a taste, not a working hypothesis, not a vehicle of human progress, but what was declared to Prophets and Apostles, *words faithful and true* (Apoc. xxii. 6).

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### III. The Modernist versus the Church Universal

The Church is Catholic, or Universal, in time, in place, and in doctrine. We are here concerned with her universality in doctrine, which consists in teaching all truths that Christ taught — all that we are bound to believe and do in order to salvation. The Church says with St. Paul, *I have not shrunk from declaring to you the whole counsel of God* (Acts xx. 27). The "heretic," who takes his name from a Greek verb meaning "to pick and choose," selects for his matter of belief part of revealed truth, and denies the rest. The "pagan" denies the Incarnation with all its consequences, all doctrine that is distinctively Christian; but, if he be a religious pagan, he believes *that there is a God, and that he is a giver of reward unto them that seek him* (Heb. xi. 6). An irreligious pagan either takes this world to be God, and is called a "pantheist," or denies the existence of any God, and is called an "atheist"; or professes not to know whether there be a God or not, and is called an "agnostic." If the agnostic further professes not to care, there is practically no difference between him and the atheist. Some agnostics, however, do care, and go groping after God in some hope of finding Him: they are still unbelievers, but not atheists.

To take an example from eschatology, the Catholic Church believes in heaven, hell, and purgatory: the old-fashioned Protestant believed in heaven and hell, but not in purgatory: the modern Protestant believes in heaven and purgatory (for so we may name any place of punishment beyond the grave where the torments are not eternal), but not in hell. Some men may be found to believe in heaven, but neither in hell nor purgatory. The modern pagan, the Rationalist or Positivist, believes in none of the three. Thus the Catholic Church affects affirmation, and all other bodies more or less of denial. Indeed, if you collected the affirmations of all other forms of Christianity, so far as they are consistent with one another, you would have a near approach to Catholic truth. The articles wanting would be the primacy of St. Peter and of the Pope, his successor, the infallibility of the Roman Church, and the duty of submission to the same.

Revealed truth is not a hotch-potch of doctrines like a heap of stones on a highway, whereof you may readily take some and leave others. Rather it is a building, or a living body. Body and building are the worse for the taking away of any of their integral parts. Still, some parts they can afford to lose more easily than others; some parts are fundamental, or vital, others not. And so of doctrine. The Incarnation, for example, is more vital to Christianity than the Real Presence. In the Church of England the Incarnation has ever been officially maintained, the Real Presence all but officially denied. Resting on the Trinity and the Incarnation, the imperfect Christianity of the Church of England has lasted over three centuries. Doubtless, many souls living in this Communion in good faith have found salvation, thanks to the portion of Catholic truth which has remained theirs. Still, the Real Presence is an immense confirmation of the Incarnation; lacking which confirming belief many Anglicans, as John Milton, have lapsed into heretical notions concerning that prime truth of Christianity. Reciprocally, a firm hold on the Incarnation, and a strong personal loyalty to Christ, God and Man, predisposes a man and prepares the way in his soul to a belief in the Real Presence.

Conversions from Anglicanism to Catholicism are brought about by much insistence on the doctrines which the two Communions hold together, the remnant, as it were, crying out to be reunited to the fulness of Catholic truth from which it was once separated. *To him that hath shall be given*: to him that makes good use of what truth of faith he has, more truth of faith shall be added. I do not say that such a man is sure to become a Catholic; but he will be carried nearer and nearer, even without his knowing it, to the truth as taught in the Catholic Church, as John Bunyan was, and some day he may go the whole length and enter her visible fold, a grace not vouchsafed to poor

John. Again, the text continues, *from him that hath not, even what he seemeth to have shall be taken away from him* (Matt. xxv. 29). The man who finding himself in a community, originally heretical, neglects to feed his soul on what Christian truth that body has retained — or who, led by God's spirit to discern the deficiencies of his first belief, refuses to fill them up and take on more — is apt to lose what Christianity he once possessed, and become in heart, if not in outward profession, a thorough unbeliever. This declension and loss of faith has occurred in individuals: it has occurred and is occurring in whole communities, heretical and schismatical. All Catholic Truth must finally come home for refuge to the Catholic Church, not finding which refuge the truth is in danger of being lost.

"True religion," says Newman, "is the summit and perfection of false religions: it combines in one whatever there is of good and true severally remaining in each. The Catholic Creed is for the most part the combination of separate truths which heretics have divided amongst themselves, and err in dividing. So that, in matter of fact, if a religious mind were educated in and sincerely attached to some form of heathenism or heresy, and then were brought under the light of truth, it would be drawn off from error into the truth, not by losing what it had, but by gaining what it had not, not by being unclothed, but by being clothed upon, *that mortality might be swallowed up in life* (2 Cor. v. 4)... True conversions are of a positive, not of a negative, nature" (*Discussions and Arguments, Scripture and the Creed*, § 6). This principle carried the writer further than he, then an Anglican, foresaw. The Cardinal was fond of telling in later days how he had gathered truth upon truth, but had never discarded any. Beginning with reverence for Unseen Powers and a strong belief in the Divine government of the world, he was led on to recognize a Church, as a visible presentation of that government: he conceived the highest regard for the episcopal office, and loathed State interference with the ecclesiastical polity: he dreaded secularism, he saw *the whole world seated in the power of the Evil One* (1 John v. 19), he took *the being everywhere contradicted* (Acts xxviii. 22) for a note of the true Church: finally he found the Church that he had come to desiderate, not under the Lion and Unicorn, but under the Cross Keys of St. Peter.

The Catholic Church, then, teaches all revealed truth, and whatever it teaches as revealed is true. Catholic teaching, further, covers the whole natural, moral law of the Ten Commandments; the Church is infallible, as in faith, so likewise in morals. Catholic teaching presupposes certain truths of philosophy, as that the human mind is capable of taking a sure hold of some truth, is cognizant of things in themselves, and knows something of substance (as is involved in the definition of Transubstantiation) over and above the phenomena that strike our senses; that the Universe is not a factor of any human mind, or minds, nor of the Divine Mind either; that the human will is free, and the soul of man immortal. Catholic teaching does not include the truths of physical science, neither does it exclude them: it does not clash with them.

I have a short examination paper ready to serve on any one who will assert that Catholic teaching clashes with physical science — these three questions:

Q. 1. With what particular branch of physical science does Catholic teaching clash?

Q. 2. What particular knowledge have you of that particular branch?

Q. 3. What knowledge have you of Catholic teaching?

This examination, I flatter myself, would eliminate about three-quarters of our opponents. Their knowledge of science would frequently be found to derive from the "little manuals" — those little

manuals that rush in where the great angels of discovery fear to tread — those little manuals that know all things, as do boys of sixteen.

There remains an outstanding fraction of genuinely scientific men, who still oppose physics to Catholic theology and take the two to be incompatible. Their attention may be directed to the third question in the examination paper. To pronounce two positions incompatible, it is not enough to know the one, however thoroughly; you must have also a competent knowledge of the other. An expert physicist, who has not the knowledge of Catholic doctrine contained in the Penny Catechism, is quite unable to judge between that doctrine and his science. Really it is not so much the conclusions of physics as the methods of physical science that indispose the mind for dogmatic theology; the latter rests upon faith in the unseen, whereas physical science is eminently the philosophy of the seen: all its conclusions are amenable to verification by the evidence of the senses. Only when he turns metaphysician — as, to be sure, he frequently does, and should do — is the physicist found wandering away from facts of sense. As I have written elsewhere: "Wherever physical science becomes the staple of education, it will be found necessary, in the interests of religion, to insist on a parallel course of metaphysics, psychology, and ethics. A popular course is all that will be possible or necessary. Otherwise, trained on physical science, without literature or philosophy, the mind suffers atrophy of the religious faculties, a disease which some seem inclined to induce upon mankind — a painful disease, nevertheless, productive of much restlessness and irritability" (*Of God and His Creatures*, p. 103).

As for the conclusions of physical science, they are often mere working hypotheses, convenient colligations of discovered facts, helpful for the discovery of further facts. Thus for the origin of man, the little manuals indeed know all about it, but sound science admits that it has achieved no final and perfect certainty, only a useful hypothesis to clench progress made, and guide further investigation. Such an hypothesis, after having served its purpose, may turn out to be false after all: nay, while they are being used, these hypotheses are often known to be no better than approximations to truth. On the Church's side there are also many provisional interpretations of Scripture, many moot points on which authority remains silent, and most likely will never speak. Thus between the strict domain of dogma and the well-ascertained generalizations of physical science there intervenes an ample borderland, or march-state, a serviceable buffer for the preservation of peace.

Of the four notes of the Catholic Church — that she is one, that she is holy, that she is Catholic, that she is Apostolic — the note Catholic alone is ordinarily predicated of her individual members. The Church is Catholic, and every one in the Church's communion is Catholic too. The individual is not in all places, nor at all times, but he holds all truth, all that the Church teaches and Christ has revealed. Now comes the question, Is the Modernist a Catholic? Is he a Catholic who holds with the Anglican Article, "The Church of Rome hath erred"? The Councils of Trent and Vatican rule "that the books of the Old and New Testament have God for their author" (Trent, sess. 4; Vat., sess. 3, cap. 2). To the Modernist this is "either the height of simplicity or the height of ignorance" (Prop. 9). Says the Modernist, "The Church's unchangeable doctrines cannot be reconciled with modern progress" (Prop. 63). Evidently he prefers modern progress, and would have the Church's doctrines changed. Why? Because they have ceased to be true (see Prop. 58); because, contrary to our Lord's promise — which, indeed, as it stands in St. John, was never given, but was by the writer of the Fourth Gospel piously excogitated (Prop. 16) — the Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth, no longer guides the Church into all truth (John xiv. 16, 17, xvi. 13). This Modernist is a heretic of the first water.

When one reads through the sixty-five condemned propositions, one cannot but conclude that the author of all those denials leaves no point of Christianity unassailed; in fact, the man is a downright pagan. His motto is not Development, but Substitution: he would treat the venerable fabric of the Catholic Church as Julius II and his successors treated old St. Peter's, or as the Great Fire and Sir Christopher treated old St. Paul's — he would clear the ancient building away and rear a new edifice in its stead. As the last condemned proposition comprehensively says, he would change Catholicism into "an undogmatic Christianity, a broad and liberal Protestantism" (Prop. 65) — that very broad, highly liberal, thoroughly undogmatic Protestantism known to us as Nonconformity.

It seems almost useless to pursue the Modernist further. Yet I am willing, by way of further exhibiting the universal solvent which he has patented for Catholic truth, to consider his view of truth in itself, of revelation, and finally of God. "Truth," says the Modernist, "is no more unchangeable than man himself: it is evolved with him, in him, and by him" (Prop. 58). "Man," said an ancient Greek, "is the measure of all things, of the being of things that be, of the not being of things that be not." So said Protagoras of Abdera, B.C. 430. "Truth," said the English etymologist, Horne Tooke, "is what a man troweth." We are not concerned with etymology, but with the question, What is truth? Truth, then, says the Modernist, is what a man thinks and believes, so long as he finds it to his profit so to think and believe, and until he finds the belief work badly, when he will give it up, and it will be true to him no longer. Thus every man makes his own truth, and there are as many truths as men. This a very common philosophy, but not as philosophy are we concerned with it, only in its theological bearing on the truth taught by the Church. It would make the articles of our faith true for believers alone, and not permanently true even for them. The whole theory turns on an identification of Truth with Science. Science certainly is changeable as man changes. Science is a product of human industry. Every age is the measure of its own Science. A barbarous age makes a rude and imperfect Science. There is Science good and bad. Science is not necessarily true. A great part of the Science that once was has been swept away as false.

Not a little of the Science that now is is destined, perhaps, to be superseded and perish likewise. But Catholic truth is not Science. Catholic truth is the deposit of revelation committed by Christ to His Church, and watched over by the continual presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church. Man is not the measure of Catholic truth; rather, Catholic truth is a God-given measure to the human mind, a standard to which its beliefs about the things of God are bound to conform. Furthermore, on the philosophy of this position, I would observe that to make Science, that is, reasoned human thought, into truth is to make man God. "God should be to us the measure of all things, much more than any man" — so Plato taught, contradicting Protagoras (Plato, *Laws*, iv. 716 C).

The Modernist view of Revelation suggests a parable. First, a few stakes are driven into the bed of a river; secondly, the river brings down brushwood which, catching in these stakes, makes in time a little island; finally, the river rises in high flood and sweeps the islet away. The first stage represents the few facts which the Modernist allows as historically true about the life of our Blessed Lord. Among these facts, there is none whatever to mark Him as God — which, indeed, the Modernist does not allow Him to be, except in a sense to be presently explained. Nor among these facts is there to be counted any intention entertained and manifested by Him of founding a Church, of instituting Sacraments, of leaving behind Him a body of Divine truth to be taught inviolate for all time (Propp. 59, 63). However, He had that in Him which set men thinking about Him after He was gone. A cluster of legends gathered about His name; weird and mystic constructions were put upon His simplest words. By the laborious efforts of ages of Christian men, smitten with craving for the

Unseen, a perfect system of dogma and ritual was evolved about their Founder, whom posterity had learnt to reverence as a Messenger from the Unseen World — nay, as bearing the character of God Himself (Prop. 29).

Such was the system of the Catholic Church: it was believed in, it met the needs of humanity, therefore it was true; not, however, with historical and scientific truth, or any truth at all that the sober judgement of intellect could approve (Propp. 14, 26). But intellect in time arose, the air was stirred with criticism, the flood of antiquarian science came down with a roar, and the cherished dogmas of Christendom were swept away, nothing remaining but a projecting point or two of historic fact, one here and another there. It appears that Revelation has not come from heaven, not from Prophets and Apostles, and lastly, from the Only-begotten Son (Heb. i. 1; John i. 18); God has not declared it, but man has elaborated it for Himself (Prop. 22). Or rather, God has declared it, but it is a Deity immanent in man, a Deity of which man is an expression and a function.<sup>1</sup> And, apparently, what the human mind has made it can unmake; it can undo revelation, as it can level any other mediaeval fabric, the construction of centuries; or, what the Modernist is rather inclined to do, it can put revelation and dogma on a new basis, not of intellect but of emotion, not of objective truth but of human craving and the satisfaction of human desire; it can command all these things to be believed, not as facts that have been and are, but as fictitious constructions for raising our minds to God. We come to read the Bible as we read the *Iliad* (Prop. 12). Well has Modernism fulfilled Newman's prophecy of the effort of educated thought "to tune it [Christianity] to a different key, and to reset its harmonies." Well, too, has our Holy Father written of the Modernists, "We number such men among the enemies of the Church."

<sup>1</sup> The Bishop of Clifton, in his Advent Pastoral, 1907, illustrates this very appositely from Ovid (*Fasti*, vi. 5, 6): *Est Deus in nobis; agitante calescimus illo: Impetus hic sacrae semina mentis habet.* — "God is within ourselves, our latent fires kindling: His sacred breath our wit inspires."

The Modernist assures us that "the Divine Reality does really exist in itself, quite independently of the person who believes in it." This he professes to know, not by any intellectual evidence that could satisfy a philosopher, but "by the experience of the individual," by "the religious sentiment," which is "a kind of intuition of the heart, which puts man in immediate contact with the very reality of God, and infuses such a persuasion of God's existence and His action both within and without man as to excel greatly any scientific conviction." As, however, the Modernist declares that "the idea of God, and also of creation, taught by Christianity is in need of reform," we cannot but suspect that, in spite of all these professions, he is not a worshipper of "God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth," quite as the Church worships under that title. I do grievously suspect that "religious sentiment" on which the whole of the Modernist religious system turns. This sentiment is a need of God, a craving after the Divine. Needing God, it is said to have an intuition (other than intellectual) — an intuition of the heart that strikes at once upon the Divine Reality. Does this really mean any more than that man makes God because he needs Him, and thus God has existence, a subjective existence only, in the belief of mankind — not in the heaven of heavens far away, whether man believe in Him or not? The Divine Reality is said "to exist in itself, quite independently of the person who believes in it." Just so; it is latent in that "subconsciousness" of which Modernists make so much, whether the individual draws this conception out into full recognition or not. And if one "person," or individual, never elaborates the "religious sentiment" within him, and never evolves God within him, other persons will do it; thus God is ever enthroned

in the conceptions of the race. He is a necessary appanage of humanity; for, as Averroes said, "there is always a philosopher in some one of the four quarters of the heavens."

God, then, is Humanity expressing itself, and, as it were, feeding its own desire; or, as has been said (not by a Modernist) "God is the highest aspiration of Humanity at its best." But this is Pantheism — not an easy thing to keep clear of once you repudiate, so thoroughly as the Modernist repudiates, all manner of scholasticism. So the Encyclical: "Other Modernists explain the immanence of God in a way which savours of Pantheism, and this in truth is the sense which tallies best with the rest of their doctrines."

When two dissimilar bodies are brought together, their approach brings out their dissimilarity. The prince of scholastics, St. Thomas, may be said to approach Modernism in this argument: "It is impossible for a natural desire to be empty and vain; for nature does nothing in vain. But the desire of nature for happiness would be empty and vain if it never possibly could be fulfilled. Therefore this natural desire of man is fulfillable. But not in this life. Therefore it must be fulfilled after this life" (*Contra Gentiles*, iii. 48). Of the Modernists the Pope writes: "Everything in their system is explained by inner impulses and needs." So they make out that there is a God: man needs a God. So, it seems, St. Thomas makes out that happiness is in store for man: man needs happiness. The parallelism is only superficial. St. Thomas is arguing, appealing to the intellect. The Modernist argues not. He holds that the existence of God cannot be established on intellectual grounds. Man's need is not, to the Modernist, a proof of the existence of God: there are no proofs; man's need simply puts him in possession of God — a position, as we have just seen, redolent of Pantheism. St. Thomas is far from saying that man's need of happiness puts him in possession of happiness. He argues from a principle inductively established, that "nature does nothing in vain." It is the principle of the completeness of nature. Nature is often incomplete in the individual, but never essentially and in the species.<sup>1</sup> The species is never truncated and cut off in its legitimate and proper development. But man would be so truncated if happiness, the proper development of human nature, were an eternal impossibility for all mankind. I am not concerned here with the validity of this argument. I insist only that it is an argument; whereas the Modernist excludes all argument, and assumes God upon unintellectual grounds.

<sup>1</sup> The argument is drawn out with care in my *Moral Philosophy*, Stonyhurst Series, pp. 13–21.

I must have expressed myself very infelicitously, if the reader who has followed me thus far is any longer at a loss to see why Pius X has condemned the system which he describes as Modernism, or can account for the condemnation only by supposing the Pope blindly and fatuously opposed to any manner of research and advancement of learning in the direction of modern thought. No Pope in his official capacity can repeat Peter's denial of his Master, or sit in silence whilst members of his flock, laymen and clerics too, repeat such denial and challenge his approval of it. To the Modernist, as to the Nestorian of old, there are two Christs — the historic Christ, and what they, I presume, would call the mystic Christ, really the legendary Christ. The historic Christ, praise Him as you will, but after all He is not God. The mystic Christ alone is God, not in fact, but in the belief of His adorers, who age after age, seeking to satisfy the thirst after the Divine which is in their hearts, have woven a web of legend about this august Figure and have created Him a God! We pass on to the Sacraments. Jesus of Nazareth had no idea of bequeathing to mankind as their food for all ages His own real Body and Blood. Man, mere man, would be mad to think of such a thing. Yet, the Modernist goes on, Jesus is the author and institutor of the Sacraments, inasmuch as He started a movement of thought, out of which the doctrine and tradition of Sacraments was gradually evolved;

and what His followers did, He may be said to have done, for does He not live in His disciples, as Plato in Platonists, Aristotle in Aristotelians, St. Thomas in Thomists, Ignatius of Loyola in Jesuits? On the same principle Lord Bacon might be called the inventor of the steam-engine.

The Modernist pleads that evidence of criticism and history is too strong to allow him any longer to acquiesce in the traditional Christianity taught by the Roman Church:

Take her, or leave her? Pardon me, royal sir,  
Election makes not up on such conditions.  
Then leave her, sir, for, by the power that made me,  
I tell you all her wealth.  
(*King Lear*, Act i. Sc. 1.)

But the Modernist will not leave the visible communion of the Catholic Church. He will not quit the Roman Obedience, albeit in what he remains still ready to obey the Pope it puzzles man's wit to say. Will he obey when the Pope is willing to let him reform the doctrine and discipline of the Roman Church at his discretion? But on those easy terms the Archbishop of Canterbury may be said to belong to the Roman Obedience. When a young man gives the rein to his passions and plunges into dissipation, his conduct is intelligible, and, in one way, very natural; his motives are definite and plain: he has chosen between two alternatives, he has taken sides; we appreciate, much as we regret, his position. And so it is when a learned scholar, once a Catholic, apostatizes, and avows that he is a Catholic no longer. His intellect has run riot, like that other man's passions; still we understand his motives and recognize their force. Neither man will obey the law, and neither of them pretends to obey it. But the Modernist still pretends to obey, still to live under obedience, if only he may command his superiors. That is the falsity of his position; he is an uncatholic Catholic. To him might St. Peter well have said — and Peter's successor virtually says it — what he said to Simon Magus: *Thou hast no portion nor lot in this word, for thy heart is not right before God; repent then* (Acts viii. 21, 22).

It has been well remarked of the Modernist, that he maintains "the uniqueness of spiritual value in Christianity in spite of the ruin of the whole of its dogmatic and much of its historical content." This is to eviscerate Christianity. That operation the Pope will not allow.

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## **Appendix: Newman and the Modernist**

Modernism is a term brought into vogue by the recent Encyclical. Newman had not the name before him, but the thing Modernism he clearly discerned and emphatically set his face against. Under one aspect he knew it as "Liberalism in Religion," under another as "Lutheranism," or "Evangelicalism." Beginning by being himself almost an Evangelical, he came more and more into opposition with that form of theology, inasmuch as he saw in it a divorce of religion from objective fact and grounds of intellect, and a basing of the whole structure upon an emotional consciousness. Evangelicalism comes of Luther; and, as I have said already, Lutheranism it was that prompted Kant to seat God in the Practical Reason after he had expelled Him from the region of Pure Reason, or Intellect proper. The Modernist, in following the trend of Kant, is all unconsciously going in the wake of Luther. Modernism is a revival of Lutheranism.

**(a)** From John Henry Newman's address in Rome, upon occasion of his receiving the Cardinal's hat, in 1879, as reported in the *Times*. He declared that he had spent his life in fighting against "Liberalism in Religion," which he thus described: "Liberalism in religion is the doctrine that there is no positive truth in religion, but that one creed is as good as another, and this is the teaching that is gaining substance and force daily. *It is inconsistent with the recognition of any religion as finally true*. It teaches that all are to be tolerated, as all are matters of opinion. *Revealed religion is not a truth, but a sentiment and a taste — not an objective fact, not miraculous*, and it is the right of each individual to make it say just what strikes his fancy. Devotion is not necessarily founded on faith. Men may go to Protestant churches and to Catholic, may get good from both, and belong to neither."

**(b)** From *The Idea of a University*, Discourse ix. (delivered in Dublin in 1852):

"It is not that you will at once reject Catholicism, but you will measure and proportion it by an earthly standard. You will throw its highest and most momentous disclosures into the background, *you will deny its principles, explain away its doctrines, rearrange its precepts*, and make light of its practices, even while you profess it... This then is the tendency, *...to fuse and recast it (Revealed Religion), to tune it, as it were, to a different key, and to reset its harmonies...* Catholicism, as it has come down to us from the first, seems to be mean and illiberal; it is a mere popular religion; it is the religion of illiterate ages or servile populations or barbarian warriors; it must be treated with discrimination and delicacy, corrected, softened, improved, if it is to satisfy an enlightened generation. It must be stereotyped as the patron of arts, or the pupil of speculation, or the protégé of science; ...it must keep pace with the age; some or other expedient it must devise, in order to explain away, or to hide, tenets under which the intellect labours, and of which it is ashamed — its doctrine, for instance, of grace, its mystery of the Godhead, its preaching of the Cross, the devotion to the Queen of Saints, or its loyalty to the Apostolic See."

**(c)** I should wish the following to be especially marked, from *The Idea of a University*, Discourse ii. § 4:

"In proportion as the Lutheran leaven spread, it became fashionable to say that Faith was, *not an acceptance of revealed doctrine, not an act of the intellect, but a feeling, an emotion, an affection, an appetency*; and, as this view of Faith obtained, so was the connection of Faith with Truth and Knowledge more and more either forgotten or denied. At length the identity of this (so-called) spirituality of heart and the virtue of Faith was acknowledged on all hands. Some men, indeed, disapproved the pietism in question, others admired it; but whether they admired or disapproved, both the one party and the other found themselves in agreement on the main point, viz., in considering that this really was in substance Religion, and nothing else; that Religion was based, *not on argument, but on taste and sentiment, that nothing was objective, everything subjective in doctrine*, ...that Religion, as such, consisted in something short of intellectual exercise, viz., in the affections, in the imagination, in inward persuasions and consolations, in pleasurable sensations, sudden changes, and sublime fancies. They learned to believe and to take it for granted, that *Religion was nothing beyond a supply of the wants of human nature, not an external fact and a work of God*.<sup>1</sup> There was, it appeared, a demand for Religion, and therefore there was a supply; human nature could not do without Religion, any more than it could do without bread; *a supply was absolutely necessary, good or bad*, and, as in the case of the articles of daily sustenance, an article which was really inferior was better than none at all. Thus Religion was useful, venerable, beautiful, the sanction of order, the stay of government, the curb of self-will and self-indulgence, which the

laws cannot reach; but, after all, on what was it based? Why, that was a question delicate to ask and imprudent to answer; but, if the truth must be spoken, however reluctantly, the long and short of the matter was this, that *Religion was based on custom, on prejudice, on law, on education, on habit, on loyalty, on feudalism, on enlightened experience, on many, many things, but not at all on reason*; reason was neither its warrant nor its instrument, and science had as little connection with it as with the fashions of the season, or with the state of the weather."

<sup>1</sup> "We would have you note well this whole theory of needs and wants, for it is at the root of the entire system of the Modernists" (Encyclical).

Let me also refer to Dr. Brownside's sermon in *Loss and Gain*, pt. i. chap. ix., a sermon in which Newman has drawn out the very antithesis of his own utterances in the pulpit of St. Mary's.

Finally, two words on Newman's doctrines of Development, as contrasted with the Modernist notion of the same. The Modernist contemplates, not any Development properly so called, but Replacement, replacement as thorough as the replacement of the Old Law by the New. Of the Old Law we read, *There is a setting aside of the former commandment, because of the weakness and unprofitableness thereof* (Heb. vii. 18). And again, *In saying a new covenant, he hath made the former old: but that which is growing old and falling into senility is nigh unto disappearance* (Heb. viii. 12–13). But the New Law is a covenant new and everlasting, of a priesthood *to which the Lord hath sworn and shall not repent* (Heb. vii. 21). The Modernist, however, would replace it by "a broad and liberal Protestantism" (Prop. 65). Very different was the "development" of Newman, who wrote: "All doctrinal knowledge flows from one fountain head. If we are able to enlarge our view and multiply our propositions, it must be merely by the comparison and adjustment of the original truths; if we would solve new questions it must be by consulting old answers. The notion of doctrinal knowledge absolutely novel, and of simple addition from without, is intolerable to Catholic ears, and never was entertained by any one who was even approaching to an understanding of our creed. Revelation is all in all in doctrine; the Apostles its sole depository, the inferential method its sole instrument, and ecclesiastical authority its sole sanction. The Divine Voice has spoken once for all, and the only question is about its meaning" (*Idea of a University*, Discourse ix. § 4).

There is a Modernist contention that dogmatic formulae ought not to be irreformable, because the meanings and connotations of words vary very much at different times. So they do in common parlance, but not in the technical language of theology. In that technical language dogmatic formulae are always couched. That same technical language is always kept up in the Church's theological schools. In the same her children are catechized. It would be as pertinent to object against the irreformability of such formulae that they are written in Latin, a language not spoken by the modern world. The formulae of Aristotelian philosophy use words in a sense in which the words are not used in our newspapers. No student of Aristotle would take "evidence" to mean evidence given in a law-court, "form" to mean a bench, "matter" to be the exudation from a wound, or "act" to be the act of a play. In reading Plato we do not interpret "idea" by the definition of Locke. Nor is the meaning of "person" in the Trinity, or of "substance" in the Holy Eucharist, coloured to our minds by Kant's category of substance, or the Fichtian notion of the Ego. Dogmatic formulae are written in dogmatic language: Aristotelian and Platonic formulae in the language of Plato and Aristotle. Such technical styles are easily picked up, and their meaning stands out clear, quite unaffected by the ordinary phraseology of life.

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